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# Black Mark on Roberts Record?

**By Michael Collins Piper**

Although John Roberts, the Bush administration's nominee for chief justice of the United States, apparently believed that the Genocide Convention was dangerous to American interests, he privately counseled then-President Ronald Reagan to sign the controversial sovereignty-robbing legislation.

The Washington Post let slip this stunning revelation on September 2, 2005 in an article detailing Roberts's service as a young lawyer on the White House legal staff during the Reagan administration.

Putting politics before the nation's interests, Roberts told Reagan, in a memo, that although the convention was bad for America it would be good public relations for the president to add his endorsement to the measure.

In fact, not long after Roberts counseled the president to take a stand in favor of the convention, Reagan publicly endorsed it while speaking before an enthusiastic pro-Israel audience at the 1984 national convention of B'nai B'rith in Washington. Reagan's support of the global initiative shocked American patriots but delighted B'nai B'rith, which had been demanding that the United States ratify the international
agreement since it was first adopted by the United Nations in 1948.

Liberty Lobby, the Washington-based populist institution, had always been in the forefront of opposition to the convention and delayed its ratification for 17 years. The
leading Senate proponent of the convention was liberal Sen. William Proxmire (D-Wis.), who literally delivered a speech promoting the treaty virtually every day he was on the Senate floor for that time.

However, because of strong opposition generated by Liberty Lobby and patriotic groups, Proxmire was never able to get the convention approved by the Senate. In the end, it was a "conservative Republican" president (widely perceived by many as a virtual savior of the republic) who gave the necessary push that made ratification of the measure possible.

The Genocide Convention still is a treaty that critics contend would effectively repeal many of the protections given to American citizens by the First, Fourth, Fifth, Sixth,
Seventh and Eighth amendments. Critics feared a number of dangers including that:

- Americans could be extradited and tried before a world court with no protection of their constitutional rights for conspiring or attempting to commit "genocide," which could merely be causing "mental harm" to a national, ethnic, racial or religious group.

- U.S. soldiers could be tried before a world court as war criminals, with no constitutional guarantees, for committing war crimes.

So-called "hate crime" legislation in the United States — along with similar "thought crime" legislation in western democracies such as Britain, Canada, Germany, Switzerland, France, New Zealand and Australia — promotes the basic themes underlying the Genocide Convention and is part of efforts to rob America's republic of its national sovereignty and American citizens of their liberties.

Despite these dangers, Reagan abandoned traditional Republican opposition to the convention. With Reagan's full support, his fellow Republican, Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole, railroaded the measure through the Senate, which ratified the convention on Feb. 19, 1986.

Hesitant to oppose their popular party leaders, traditional GOP opponents rolled over and played dead, allowing the measure to pass. They were told their support for the
convention would "help the GOP win Jewish votes." Then Reagan signed the treaty.

What is ironic about the instrumental role Reagan played in getting the convention ratified is that Reagan was a devoted supporter of the one nation — Israel — that has traditionally violated the convention and that could end up being the first nation brought up for prosecution under the terms of the convention.

In fact, on June 18, 2001, 23 survivors of the 1982 massacre in the Sabra and Shatila refugee camps filed a complaint in Belgium charging that Ariel Sharon, Israel's defense minister at the time, and other Israeli military officials are responsible for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide related to the ghastly killings that occurred there.

The group cited the Geneva Convention and Nuremberg as setting a precedent for bringing their international lawsuit against Sharon.

After multiple rulings saying the international court had jurisdiction, the Israeli prime minister narrowly escaped prosecution only after pressure was put on the Belgian government by the United States to drop the case.

**Photograph of Chief Justice Roberts walking down Supreme Court steps with Justice John Paul Stevens.**

Caption: **"POSSIBLE PITFALL:** Chief Justice John Roberts (left) walks down the steps of the Supreme Court with Justice John Paul Stevens after he took the Supreme Court bench for the first time, October 3, 2005, in Washington, D.C. Roberts replaced William H. Rehnquist as the new chief justice. Questions have recently been raised about Justice Roberts's stance on the Genocide Convention which he initially opposed but counseled President Ronald Reagan to sign. Will Roberts hold America to the strictures of the sovereignty-robbing treaty?"

A journalist specializing in media critique, Michael Collins Piper is the author of ***Final Judgment***, the controversial "underground bestseller" documenting the collaboration of Israeli intelligence in the assassination of John F. Kennedy. He is also the author of ***The High Priests of War***, ***The New Jerusalem***, ***The Judas Goats***, and ***Dirty Secrets***, all available from America First Books and First Amendment Books. He has lectured on suppressed topics in places as diverse as Malaysia, Japan, Canada, Russia and Abu Dhabi.

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